

**Indiana Department of Education
Task Force on Autism Spectrum Disorders
Charter Document
Original January 26, 2006
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Goal: To improve the academic and functional skill development of children with an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) through the development of regulations, and/or standards of practice pertaining to: 1) the minimal training required for individuals working in an educational placement with these children, 2) the guidelines for collaboration between disciplines working in the educational placement (i.e., inclusive of special educator, instructional assistant, general educator, administrator, resource therapists), 3) the recommendations for bridging service to the child across caregivers in the academic, medical, and home environments (inclusive of primary caregivers and other family members), and 4) information that will help to inform policy making in the legislature surrounding these and other issues.

Impetus:

- 1) DOE would like to be proactive (i.e., as opposed to reactive) regarding issues surrounding service to children with an Autism Spectrum Disorder and their families through the special education system.
- 2) DOE wants to increase collaboration with appropriate State entities, parents, family groups and advocacy groups to increase the awareness as well as effective and efficient utilization of community services for children with Autism Spectrum Disorders that will improve the overall education, development, and success of these children in the community.
- 3) DOE needs to provide guidance to the Directors of Special Education regarding the range of community service options for children with Autism.
- 4) DOE sees the need for standards regarding the training to and services from staff in the special education setting.
- 5) With the increased legislative attention on policy decisions influencing the service to children across the Autism Spectrum in the public schools, the DOE seeks pooling of knowledge and expertise to make informed policy recommendations and platforms.
- 6) In general, DOE seeks to bridge all areas of services related to the education and development of the individual with ASD in an effort to service the whole child.
- 7) Article 7 is being rewritten and DOE would like input and recommendations from the Autism community.

Strategies:

- 1) Focus on a holistic approach to the child and the family by encouraging coordination, collaboration, and integration of caregivers/services across settings.
- 2) Assist in the determination of efficient use of resources and appropriate funding opportunities for services for children with Autism Spectrum Disorders within the school system.
- 3) Create partnerships between schools, other health providers, parents and children with Autism Spectrum Disorders by encouraging collaboration and coordination across these individuals/systems.
- 4) Provide guidelines and recommendations regarding appropriate training for families as well as providers in the special education system inclusive of administration, special educators, general educators, resource specialists, and support staff.
- 5) Establish a short-term and long-term vision for the Department of Education as to effective and appropriate service provision for children with an Autism Spectrum Disorder
- 6) Provide guidance to the Department of Education on state policy regarding issues affecting children with an Autism Spectrum Disorder and their families including rule promulgation and legislative actions.